

O 191212Z AUG 08  
FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6145  
INFO SOUTHERN AF DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS LUSAKA 000825

DEPT FOR AF/FO, AF/S; PARIS AND LONDON FOR AF WATCHERS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [ZA](#)

SUBJECT: GRZ ANNOUNCES DEATH OF PRESIDENT LEVY PATRICK  
MWANAWASA

REF: A. LUSAKA 817

[1](#)B. LUSAKA 777

[1](#)C. LUSAKA 734

[1](#)1. President Levy Patrick Mwanawasa died early Tuesday morning in Paris, a visibly distraught Vice President Banda announced on national television at 1:35 p.m. Lusaka time. Banda went on to say that there will be seven days of national mourning, and urged Zambians to pray for the President and his family.

[1](#)2. Immediately following the Vice President's announcement, the Embassy prepared and distributed a press release expressing its condolences. The Zambian population, which had grown increasingly skeptical of GRZ insistence that the President was responding well to treatment, will probably take the news of Mwanawasa's death with genuine sadness but no real surprise. Post has consulted with government security officials and does not anticipate any disruptions to public order or security as a result of Mwanawasa's death. According to the Constitution, Vice President Banda remains in charge, but the clock is now ticking for elections, based on Constitutional guidelines, to be held no later than November 17, 2008 - 90 days from today.

KOPLOVSKY